

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
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R 210605Z JUN 77  
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AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
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AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 3839

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ASEC, MOPS, PINS, PINT, ET  
SUBJ: OVERVIEW OF PROVINCES III - SOUTH AND EAST

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 0163 (NOTAL), B. ADDIS ABABA 3718 (NOTAL)  
C. ADDIS ABABA 3580 (NOTAL), D. ADDIS ABABA 3711 (NOTAL)  
E. ADDIS ABABA 3607 (NOTAL)

1. REF (A) SUMMARIZED DISTURBANCES AND DISSIDENCE IN  
COUNTRYSIDE AS OF JANUARY 1977. THIS IS THIRD OF FOUR-PART  
CABLE REPORTING PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENTS JANUARY THROUGH  
JUNE 1977.

A. SIDAMO - NORTHERN HALF OF PROVINCE, WHERE CHIEF AGRI-  
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CULTURAL RESOURCES AND POPULATIONS CONCENTRATED, CALM. HOW-  
EVER, INSURGENT ACTIVITIES AGAIN REACHED HIGH LEVEL IN  
SOUTHERN HALF OF PROVINCE. SMALL INSURGENT BANDS  
APPEARED TO HAVE CAPABILITY OF ATTACKING ANY VILLAGE  
THROUGHOUT SOUTH AND SEEMED AS MUCH MOTIVATED BY  
THIEVERY AS BY POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. MOST RELIA-  
BLE SOURCES CLAIM HIT-AND-RUN INSURGENTS ETHNIC

SOMALIS OR SOMALI-TRAINED AND ARMED GALLAS. AWASSA-MOYALE (ON KENYAN BORDER) ROAD INTERDICTED NUMEROUS TIMES AND CONSIDERED UNSAFE FOR CIVILIAN TRAVEL. SOME COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC MAY STILL ENTER FROM KENYA, BUT MUST BE ESCORTED BY EPMG MILITARY AS FAR NORTH AS YABELO (210 KMS). REPORTED EPMG RELUCTANCE TO PROVIDE TIMELY ESCORT HAS PROBABLY DISCOURAGED KENYA/ETHIOPIAN TRADE. SECOND MAJOR PROVINCIAL ROAD, WHICH PARALLELS ADJACENT BALE PROVINCIAL BORDER, CONSIDERED UNSAF SOUTH OF KEBRE MENGIST, 520 KMS NORTH OF KENYA/SOMALI BORDER. PEASANT MILITIA FORMERLY CAPABLE OF CONTAINING HIT-AND-RUN INSURGENTS, PROBABLY THINNED OUT IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN CURRENT TRAINING EFFORTS OUTSIDE ADDIS. IF PORTION OF MILITIA RETURNS TO PROVINCE, LEVEL OF SECURITY SHOULD BE NOTICEABLY IMPROVED. INSURGENTS DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE CAPABILITY TO CAPTURE AND HOLD ANY MAJOR TOWN OR IMPORTANT ECONOMIC ASSET IN PROVINCE. PERHAPS AS INDICATION EPMG DISPLEASURE WITH PROVINCIAL SITUATION, BOTH CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR AND DEPUTY WERE REPLACED IN MARCH.

B. ARSSI - SECURITY HAS DETERIORATED NOTICEABLY SINCE JANUARY. ACTIVITIES OF REPORTEDLY SOMALI-SUPPORTED INSURGENTS HAVE INCREASED IN SOUTHEASTERN AREAS BORDERING BALE AND HARRARGHE PROVINCES. EPMG HAS COUNTERED WITH OPERATIONS CONDUCTED BY ARMY AND CONFIDENTIAL

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PEASANT MILITIA, WITH CERTAIN DEGREE OF SUCCESS. SERIOUS CONCERN AMONG POPULATION OVER LOCAL SECURITY REPORTED AS FAR NORTH AS ASSELA (PROVINCIAL CAPITAL). VULNERABILITY OF NEW ROAD LINKING ASSELA TO MAIN HIGHWAY AT NAZARETH OPENED IN MARCH, ALTHOUGH NOT YET INTERDICTED, HAS MADE PEOPLE RELUCTANT TO USE IT. LOW-LEVEL EPRP PAMPHLETEERING AND RECRUITING IN ASSELA HAS ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO TENSION. DESPITE INCURSIONS, EPMG NOT FACING IMMEDIATELY SERIOUS THREAT AND ABLE TO CONTAIN SITUATION. PROVINCIAL CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR AND DEPUTY BOTH REPLACED IN MARCH.

C. BALE - WHILE NUMBER OF INSURGENT ATTACKS HAS PROBABLY INCREASED SOMEWHAT, THEY STILL OF HIT-AND-RUN NATURE, AND HAVE NOT CAUSED POOR SITUATION TO DETERIORATE APPRECIABLY FURTHER. SITUATION APPEARS SERIOUS FROM ADDIS PERSPECTIVE, WITH LACK OF SUFFICIENT MATERIAL AND REGULAR TROOPS TO COUNTER INSURGENTS EFFECTIVELY (REF A). LEVEL OF SOMALI SUPPORT TO WESTERN SOMALIA LIBERATION FRONT (WSLF) APPEARS TO HAVE INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY. THERE NOW REPORTS OF MORE SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS BEING USED BY INSURGENTS AND IN-

CREASED FREQUENCY OF ATTACKS WOULD IMPLY CONCOMMITANT INCREASE OF AMMUNITION AND MEN. EPMG GARRISONS REMAIN EXTREMELY VULNERABLE AND DIFFICULT TO RESUPPLY BY UNCERTAIN ROADS, BUT NONE HAS BEEN OVERRUN YET. WORK ON AID-FINANCED DROUGHT ROADS IN PROVINCE REMAIN AT STANDSTILL. ETHIOPIAN MEDIA CONTINUE TO DEVOTE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS IN PROVINCE, BUT EMBASSY UNABLE TO VERIFY EPMG CLAIMS OF HAVING LIQUIDATED HUNDREDS OF INFILTRATORS. GOBA (PROVINCIAL CAPITAL) STILL EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY ROAD. FORMER DEPUTY PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATOR PROMOTED TO CHIEF AND NEW DEPUTY APPOINTED IN MARCH.

D. HARRARGHE - PROVINCE HAS EXPERIENCED EXPONENTIAL INCREASE IN INSURGENT ACTIVITY SINCE JANUARY. IMPORTANT EPMG RESETTLEMENT PROJECT AT GODE, IN SOUTHERN PART OF PROVINCE, HAS BEEN HIT SEVERAL TIMES BY ETHNIC SOMALI INSURGENTS, ONCE (MARCH) RESULTING IN DEATH OF AMERICAN MISSIONARY. EPMG GARRISONS AT EL CARRE AND IMI NEAR BALE FRONTIER HAVE ALSO BEEN ATTACKED, AND WHILE STILL INTACT, REPORTEDLY NEUTRALIZED IN PLACE. TERRAIN BETWEEN JIJIGA AND HARRAR IDEAL FOR GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES, WITH ROAD INTERDICTION FREQUENT AND JIJIGA ISOLATED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. IN MARCH, NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER AGENCIES IN JIJIGA AREA, INCLUDING IRISH CONCERN, WERE FORCED TO WITHDRAW THEIR PERSONNEL BECAUSE OF LACK OF SECURITY. HARRAR HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN SUBJECT TO LOW-LEVEL TERROR TACTICS, WITH FEW ROCKET AND MORTAR ATTACKS ON OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN AND LIGHT ARMS FIRE AT NIGHT, BUT APPEARS SECURE AT PRESENT. ATMOSPHERE IN DIRE DAWA INCREASINGLY TENSE, AS OCCASIONAL NIGHT GUNFIRE IN CITY BECOMES MORE FREQUENT AND CITY'S DEPENDENCY ON RAILROAD HAS BECOME MORE THREATENED. RECENT INSURGENT ACTIVITIES NEW DIRE DAWA DEEPEST NORTHWESTERN INCURSION INTO PROVINCE TO DATE. FOLLOWING MAJOR EPMG EFFORT TO CONSOLIDATE AFAR NATIONALITY IN MARCH, PMAC CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER WAS ASSASSINATED JUST OUTSIDE GEWANI (APPROX 100 KMS NORTH OF DIRE DAWA). MAIN NORTH-SOUTH ROAD FROM JIJIGA TO GODE HAS BEEN ATTACKED MANY TIMES AND EXTREMELY UNSAFE, BUT NOT COMPLETELY CLOSED. ADDIS-DIRE DAWA-HARRAR ROAD OPEN AND RELATIVELY SAFE. BEYOND HARRAR, AS IN PAST, ROAD QUITE DANGEROUS TO TRAVEL. NEWEST FACTOR UNBALANCING FORMER EQUATION IN HARRARGHE IS DAMAGE DONE TO RAILROAD AND APPARENT SOMALI INTENTION (REF E) TO KEEP RAILROAD TO

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2. COMMENTS TO FOLLOW BY SEPTTEL.  
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## Message Attributes

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**To:** STATE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009